

Tawas Point Lighthouse Lighthouse Keeper Program – 2016

The Lighthouse

The Tawas Point Lighthouse (ca. 1876) is a popular landmark in Tawas Point State Park, recognized throughout the Tawas Bay region. It attracts visitors from around the world. The keeper program offers the unique opportunity to spend extended periods of time immersed in the lighthouse experience. Two shipwrecks sit off the shoreline of Tawas Point, providing additional historical and educational value to visitors.

Tawas Point State Park

Tawas Point State Park is located on the shores of Lake Huron, 2.5 miles southeast of East Tawas in Iosco County, Michigan. The sandy beaches on both Lake Huron and Tawas Bay, combined with the warm shallow waters of the bay, provide ideal swimming conditions at Tawas Point. Bird watchers find Tawas Point especially attractive because of the large populations of migratory birds that flock to the park. The park additionally offers 193 campsites, 2 miles of hiking trails, sandy beaches, 2 camper cabins and 2 mini-cabins. The most iconic feature of the peninsula, however, is the Victorian-era Tawas Point Lighthouse.

Tawas Point Lighthouse Keeper Program

The Tawas Point Lighthouse Keeper Program is administered by the Michigan Historical Center (MHC), an agency in the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, assisted by the Friends of Tawas Point State Park. The program provides participating keepers with the privilege of living at one of Michigan's most notable lighthouses, and assisting in its preservation and presentation to the public.

Keeper Benefits

Lighthouse keepers are provided a minimum of two weeks of free lodging in the second-story quarters of the historic light keeper's dwelling which overlooks the scenic shores of Lake Huron. Accommodations include two bedrooms which can sleep up to three adults, along with a modern fully-equipped kitchen, shower and bath. Free parking is also provided. The keeper schedule is designed to allow participants time to enjoy recreational activities on their own while providing valuable volunteer services.

Who Can Serve as a Keeper

Keepers can be individuals or teams such as a wife and husband. A minimum of two keepers is required at all times, although three is preferred. Keepers must be 18 years or older. Individuals with knowledge of lighthouse lore or Great Lakes maritime history are especially encouraged to apply.

Minimum Requirements for all Keepers

Keepers must be willing to provide tours five days a week, Thursday through Monday, totaling 30 hours per week. Participants should also be comfortable speaking to the public, in good

health, and able to climb the 85-step lighthouse tower as a regular part of daily tours. Other requirements include:

- Serve a **minimum** of two consecutive weeks; preference will be given to those willing to stay four or more weeks
- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Provide your own food and toiletries
- Pass a background check
- Having a Recreation Passport for your vehicle is not required, but is preferred
- DNR employees are not eligible

Keeper Daily Duties

The primary responsibilities of keepers include greeting visitors, giving tours, and providing information about the lighthouse and Tawas area. In addition to providing an informative and educational experience, keepers will be asked to perform basic facility maintenance, sweeping floors, removing trash, and thoroughly cleaning the living quarters upon departure. The total commitment is about 35 hours per week.

Keeper Schedule of Duties

The 2016 Lighthouse Keepers Program will take place from May 12th through October 13th. Keepers are required to participate for periods of two consecutive weeks or more during this time. Keepers will be responsible for offering tours to the visiting public, Thursday through Monday, at 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. The lighthouse will be closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays, giving program participants time for personal chores and sightseeing in the area.

Keeper Orientation and Training

All lighthouse keepers selected to participate will be asked to attend a training session presented by MHC interpreters at Tawas Point State Park. Information packets will be provided to all program participants, as well as additional orientation upon arrival.

Application Process

Interested individuals must complete the Tawas Point Lighthouse Keeper application form at www.michigan.gov/tawaslighthouse. Click on Lightkeeper Program under Explore. It can be completed online or printed and mailed in. **Application reviews will begin February 16, 2016, and continue until all slots are filled.** For further information contact:

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